

NOVEMBER 5, 1939.

40TH ANNUAL CHICAGO AUTO SHOW OPENS

NATION SPEEDS MODERN ROAD BUILDING WORK

Emphasize Traffic Hazard Removal.

Washington, D. C., Nov. 4.—The task of remaking America's highway system to conform with modern traffic conditions is proceeding steadily, according to the Federal Public Roads Administration.

During the fiscal year ended last June 30 more than 17,000 miles of highway of all types were completed, exceeding the work of the preceding year by 1,800 miles.

In the program of grade crossing elimination and protection during the 1939 fiscal year, 382 crossings were eliminated, 85 obsolete elimination structures were reconstructed, and 438 crossings were protected by signals and other devices.

Outstanding feature of the year's work, in the opinion of the roads administration, was the large amount of work in widening, straightening, and otherwise modernizing important main highways, progress in eliminating hazards at grade crossings, and the completion of nearly 3,000 miles of secondary roads in the program begun the preceding year.

In cooperation with the states and under immediate supervision of the state highway departments, 9,786 miles were completed on rural portions of the federal aid system, 2,971 miles on the secondary or farm to market systems, and 725 miles were improved in municipalities.

Improvements in federally controlled areas, reconstruction of flood damaged roads, and construction of roads with funds allotted by other agencies aggregated 3,678 miles.

The year's work was supported mainly by federal aid funds. The apportionment for the fiscal year was 125 million dollars for improvement of the federal aid system, 25 million for secondary or farm to market roads, and 50 million for elimination of hazards at highway-railroad grade crossings.

Equal amounts had been provided for the preceding fiscal year and some of these funds remained available. States are required to match federal funds supplied for federal aid highway and secondary road projects, but are not required to match funds for grade crossing elimination.

The apportionment for the 1940 fiscal year amounts to 100 million dollars for regular federal aid, 15 million for secondary or farm to market roads, and 50 million for elimination of hazards at highway-railroad grade crossings. These sums all included unused balances allotted by other years.

The Illinois apportionments for the 1940 fiscal year include \$4,043,313 for regular aid, \$606,497 for secondary roads, and \$1,030,486 for elimination of grade crossing hazards. On Aug. 31 the balances remaining for Illinois projects were \$2,745,900 for regular aid, \$890,385 for secondary roads, and \$2,083,108 for grade crossing projects.

Apportionment Due in December. In December of this year the Public Roads Administration will apportion for the 1941 fiscal year 115 million dollars in regular federal aid, 15 million for secondary roads, and 50 million for grade crossings.

Highway building of the future is expected to be guided by the special report submitted by the former bureau of public roads to President Roosevelt on April 27, 1935, with the recommendation that emphasis on express highways. It did not support toll highways as feasible. The report also recommended creation of a federal land authority to acquire, hold, sell, and lease lands needed for public purposes.

Highway planning surveys are being conducted by 46 states in cooperation with the public roads administration and are providing data which will enable highway officials to plan future work. Information is being gathered on mileage, location, and type of surface of all rural roads, the traffic each section of road carries, and the sources of all highway funds as well as purposes for which the funds are expended.

Pan-American Highway to Link U. S., 17 Countries. The Pan-American Highway, longest international roadway in the world, will play an important part in linking the countries of the western hemisphere. It will extend 3,000 miles from Texas to join the United States and Canada with 17 countries of Central and South America. But it isn't likely to be finished in this generation.

Congress St. Parkway Nice Idea in 1908

BY CHARLES M. HAYES.

(President, Chicago Motor Club.)

Agitation for a Congress street improvement has been going on for many years.

The city is now taking steps to build it. The idea for this superhighway project originally came from the Burnham report of 1908.

Daniel H. Burnham, thinking in terms of the traffic of 31 years ago, considered Congress street as an axis of the central business district.

In Burnham's day there were beautiful homes and stately mansions on Michigan avenue, Wabash avenue and Prairie avenue from 18th to 35th streets. Then the trend turned northward. Since then the axis shifted gradually, until in 1939 we find it at about 110 feet north of Randolph street.

The construction of tall buildings has been greatest in the region between Madison street and Oak street. Should Serve Largest Number. In considering the building of a superhighway, thought should be given to the greatest convenience of the greatest number. For serving the greatest number of downtown workers, the location of a superhighway should be as close as possible to the present axis, or at least readily accessible to it.

In the Congress street proposal motorists see first of all an estimated cost of condemnation of 17 million dollars. We believe that such a cost is excessive. We do not believe it should be taken from the gas tax fund, nor can we subscribe to the theory that the building of a broad parkway on this street would actually prove of benefit to real estate.

We cannot forget the experience on South Parkway, where the property owners contributed to the \$1,500,000 cost of building this roadway from 22d street to 23d street in 1920. No upsurge in real estate values was experienced on this project.

We estimate that 10 1/2 miles of a west side elevated highway would cost about half that of a Congress street parkway and that it would serve a far greater population, not only in Chicago but in the suburbs as well.

We cannot dismiss the point of service to the suburbs. Many thousands who live in the suburbs have business in Chicago and trade in Chicago. They contribute to the greatness of the city.

Lacks Needed Outlets. Other reasons for desiring a superhighway north of Randolph street are the lack of connection. Congress street would have to the eastward, but this is not the only difficulty encountered.

Only 43 per cent of the maximum traffic in Congress street could be handled thru the grade at the new postoffice. At Canal street we find that the number of eastbound cars able to enter the postoffice arcade would be limited by the grade crossing at Canal street.

If the Congress street improvement were to be terminated at Wells street, this would dump thru traffic from the arcade onto Franklin street, Wells street, which are clearly inadequate to handle additional vehicle traffic. Those who know the district realize how heavy trucking and purely local traffic is on these streets.

CHICAGOANS ON TOUR! MOTORISTS DRIVE 25% MORE IN '39 THAN '38

BY BERT VANDERWARE.

(Manager, Touring Bureau, Chicago Motor Club.)

With the war completely blocking foreign travel, winter touring will assume record breaking proportions, with Florida, the Gulf states, California, the southwest, and Mexico attracting thousands of Chicagoand motorists.

Motor travel started on the upgrade early this year, and, as the 1939 season draws to its close, it is now possible to analyze some of the trends. A study reveals:

1. Travel by the Chicagoand motorist as a whole was up nearly 25 per cent over 1938.

2. Not only did more motorists take to the road during the summer of 1939, but the average vacation trip was longer in both time and distance. Numerous long trips this year were from five to seven thousand miles.

3. The volume of week-end and short trips also was much higher than last year.

4. The city of Chicago continued to increase in popularity as the goal for week-end and one-day trips by motorists in surrounding territories.

Illinois supplied a large share of these visitors. The state ranked second in the number of visitors at Sequoia and Grand Canyon, third in Zion, and occupied a comparably high position in the list of visitors to other national parks and monuments.

THE PACE-SETTER IN AMERICA

A good example for other industries to follow.



CHICAGO THOUGHT UP SUPERROADS; DIDN'T BUILD 'EM

BY EUGENE S. TAYLOR.

(Manager, Chicago Plan Commission.)

Twelve years ago superhighways were a novelty thruout the United States.

Today they still are a novelty in Chicago, but not in other leading cities. The superhighway idea originated with the Chicago Plan commission, but other cities have built these roads, while Chicago still is talking about them and, in fact, is even arguing about whether or not they are desirable.

In 1927 the plan commission's technical staff under Hugh E. Young, chief engineer, presented a report which showed the value and need of providing the city with a system of grade separation highways, now commonly called superhighways. The basis of this plan was to be an express traffic circuit around the congested central business district, with ten or a dozen express superhighways radiating outward in all directions.

For the most part, the radial routes which the Chicago Plan commission then suggested for these grade-separated express roads followed alongside already elevated steam railroad rights-of-way.

There were several reasons for this. The railroads were built to extend outward from Chicago and connect this community with other important cities. As the country developed, towns and villages grew up along the railroads, and highways were built between these towns and Chicago. Thus by paralleling the railroads, the plan commission's staff proposed to locate the superhighways automatically in the areas of maximum vehicular travel.

A second important reason for locating superhighway routes alongside elevated railroad rights-of-way where possible is that nearby land and buildings usually are of comparatively low value. Thus, routes thru such districts have the advantage of smaller cost than routes thru high-priced areas. Economy in acquiring rights-of-way is an important element in proper superhighway construction, and one which should not be overlooked merely because the money to pay for Chicago's superhighways is to come from the gas tax.

Now the city, the county and the state are engaged upon the task of selecting three initial superhighway routes, and determining the type of their construction. It is to be hoped that in the public interest due consideration will be given the outstanding advantages of locating these routes, wherever possible, alongside existing railroad embankments, and building them of the elevated, solidified type of construction.

Question of Modern Woman: What's Under the Car Hood?

BY IRENE STEYSKAL.

These things a woman appreciates. The engineers have given careful thought, also, to slanting glass at angles which deflect reflection. Women are enthusiastic about the sealed headlights which mean safer and easier night driving.

Mrs. Cardriver, she has grown more engineering, has not relaxed her demands for the refinements of good line, color harmony, attractive upholstery, and appointments. Arm rests, recessed ash containers, and other artistically installed gadgets, found heretofore only in the expensive cars, now grace almost every make.

Fabrics are soft, pliable. Fabrics and plastics give pleasing variety. One new upholstery cloth has the rich appearance of velvet, but is soft and pliable and has a surprising smoothness. It takes no liberties with hems and stockings as the old tugging mohairs. The new fabric has a porous back which insures comfort even in the warmest weather. After hard service all it requires to make it like new, they say, is a scrubbing with frothy soapsuds.

As for color, the designers must have taken a happy hint from October. Who wouldn't feel glamorous gliding away in a mechanical cloud of desert tan? Or high heeled and adventurous spinning down the gold and scarlet glory of an autumn road on a mechanical breeze lacquered in airplane blue?

Women Like New Gear Shift. So, feminine interest is drawn first toward such developments as the handy gear shift raised to the steering post of most cars of the 1940 series, purring engines that function without vibration and eat up the miles on reduced gas rations, improved springs, and new safety devices.

Safety assurance figures prominently in the woman's appraisal of a car. Wider windshields afford broader views in the new models and many are equipped with shatterproof safety glass, developed at great cost, and

ing advantages of locating these routes, wherever possible, alongside existing railroad embankments, and building them of the elevated, solidified type of construction.

Beyond that, if these three new superhighways are to function to their fullest efficiency, they should not be located and designed as isolated and unrelated projects, but should be planned and built as integral parts of a comprehensive superhighway system. Especially should the plan include a downtown connecting circuit around the city's central business district, and adequate and properly located means of access to and exit from each superhighway, both inside Chicago and in the surrounding suburban communities.

BLAMES A WEAK DRIVERS' LICENSE LAW FOR DEATHS

BY SIDNEY J. WILLIAMS.

(Director, National Safety Council.)

Illinois traffic deaths last year went down nearly 20 per cent, and the death rate was only a trifle above the national average.

In eight months of 1939 the national total has gone down a net of 4 per cent, but Illinois' record shows a 5 per cent increase.

The difference between a 5 per cent up and 4 per cent down means 112 people were killed in Illinois a cidents in this year who would have been alive today if our state had done as well as the rest of the country.

3,000 to 4,000 Injured. Along with these 112 deaths there were over 10,000 property damage accidents, and about \$5,000,000 economic waste. These are not the losses from eight months of traffic accidents. They are only the difference between the losses we suffered and those we would have suffered if the people of Illinois had been able to travel as safely as those in the rest of the United States.

Why hasn't our driver's license law, passed by the last legislature, made some impression on this bad record? One answer is that the law took effect only May 1. No new law affecting millions of people over a large area can be expected to work perfectly in the first year. In most other states, however, the enactment of a good driver's license law, well administered, has saved lives the very first year and the reductions have increased as the laws became better understood.

The sad fact is that the Illinois driver's license law is not a particularly good law and that our courts are not making as much use of it as they might.

All Motordom Joins in Exhibit of Its Marvels

In this section are stories and pictures of the 1940 automobiles and authoritative articles on roads, regulations, taxes, and touring—subjects related to motor car ownership.

BY HAL FOUST.

Chicago's 40th annual automobile show opened yesterday in the International Amphitheater, Halsted and 43d streets. Attendance in the afternoon and evening prompted a prediction from the management that last year's total of 310,000 will be exceeded before the show ends next Sunday night.

The hours, daily including today, are from 11 a. m. to 11 p. m. All of the 1940 model cars are there, from midgets to limousines. This is the only opportunity to see them all under one roof available for ready comparisons by the idly curious as well as the acquisitive.

The year's advancements in automotive engineering are staged by methods dramatic and yet simple enough for the understanding of persons without mechanical knowledge. Chasses, engines, clutches, transmissions, and the like have been bisected, taken apart, and labeled so a layman can see what makes the wheels go around.

Prices Lower or Unchanged. Lecturers at these exhibits, men with school room pointers and the fluency of radio announcers, tell of the better headlight, the improved manifold and carburetion for greater fuel economy, the enlarged windshield and window areas for better visibility, and the refinements in gear shift operation. Then they point to price tags.

The prices either have been shaved from the 1939 figures or, which probably is just as remarkable, have been unchanged notwithstanding a rise in the cost of materials and noticeable advancements in values.

This American industry, operating in free competition with venturesome capital backing technical ingenuity, has produced a better product for 1940.

In 1900 patrons went to the old coliseum to marvel at a horseless carriage that could start, turn, climb an incline, and stop. It was a vehicle too expensive and too uncertain for many to don the linen duster and the goggles. Constantly each year since, and this year is no exception, the automobile has been improved and brought within the purchasing power of a larger part of the population.

Leaders Are Optimistic. Executives of the automobile industry speak optimistically of their immediate future. Leaders say their only fears are the dangers of war profit inflation. Otherwise they see a continuation of the upturn in their business which resulted in a 33 per cent increase in production during the year ending Sept. 1 as compared with the previous year, according to the Automobile Manufacturers' association.

In Cook county, the sales prospect has been even brighter than nationally. New car in production from this county during the first nine months of 1939 were 48 per cent above the total during the corresponding period of 1938.

The construction of superhighways in Chicago, enhancing the usefulness of an automobile in this region, is expected to make this an even better car market.

Two Stage Shows Daily. While the new cars are the main attraction at the automobile show, there are other features of interest. At 3:30 p. m. each day and at 9 o'clock each evening there is a stage presentation in the central arena of the amphitheater. Cars receive the spotlight in an environment of music and pretty girls.

Sections of the spacious amphitheater have been assigned to trucks and other sections to trailer coaches, accessories, gadgets, and educational safety displays.

It's a big show devoted to a popular subject. It's convenient to attend, a twelve hour continuous performance, and with a free and guarded parking area near the doors accommodating 8,000 automobiles.

Divert 158 Millions Road Funds to Other Channels

With \$158,000,000 of highway funds' money diverted from regular channels last year, 13.5 cents out of every highway tax dollar went for projects remote from motor vehicle use. The diversion of highway user taxes now takes one out of every eight automobile tax dollars.

Auto Show Facts

WHEN—Daily, including today, thru next Sunday; 11 a. m. to 11 p. m. WHERE—International Amphitheater, Halsted and 43d streets; free parking for 8,000 cars.

EXHIBITS—All 1940 American passenger cars; trucks; trailer coaches; accessories; educational displays; used cars; power boats. SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS—"Dame Fashion," musical melange, at 3:30 each afternoon and 9 o'clock each evening, television demonstrations.

SPONSOR—Chicago Automobile Trade Association.

ADMISSION—35 cents, including tax; children, 25 cents.

10 1/2 MILLIONS CHICAGO AREA 1939 ROAD CASH

11 Millions Will Be Spent in 1940.

BY ROBERT KINGERY.

(Manager, Chicago Regional Planning Assn.)

(Map on page 2.)

Outside Chicago, in the 15 counties of the metropolitan area, road improvements totaling \$10,450,000 were completed during the 1939 construction season. The highway departments of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana, and the highway departments of the 15 counties, spent \$8,250,000, while an additional \$2,200,000 was spent by the suburban municipalities.

The outlook is for \$10,950,000 worth of road improvements in 1940. This region now has 4400 miles of highways, 200 miles of it four or more lanes wide, but there remains a demand for superhighways, parkways, and grade separations.

Illinois Builds 3 Super Units. The 1939 construction season saw the state of Illinois building units of three superhighways, while the Indiana highway commission was building one superhighway unit. In Cook county, and a short distance into Kane county, 11 miles of 22 foot pavement were being built on one side of the center of Higgins road, a 240 foot wide right-of-way, so that as traffic develops the parallel two lane pavement may be laid on the other side of a park-like center strip.

Eight miles more of the same design were under construction on Lincoln highway which now extends to Valparaiso. Most of the right-of-way has been obtained to carry this superhighway around the south side of Valparaiso to connect with the old Lincoln highway to the east. The bridges and railway structures on this Illinois project was a five mile section on Butterfield road between routes 54 and 53 in Du Page county, and an intersection with Higgins road at Oakton street in Cook county. The third Illinois project was a five mile section on Butterfield road between routes 54 and 53 in Du Page county. In each case the bridges and railway-highway grade separations were completed for four lanes of pavement.

Indiana Extends Pavement. Indiana in the meantime was completing another 12 mile section of divided pavement on the Lincoln highway which now extends to Valparaiso. Most of the right-of-way has been obtained to carry this superhighway around the south side of Valparaiso to connect with the old Lincoln highway to the east. The bridges and railway structures on this Illinois project was a five mile section on Butterfield road between routes 54 and 53 in Du Page county, and an intersection with Higgins road at Oakton street in Cook county. The third Illinois project was a five mile section on Butterfield road between routes 54 and 53 in Du Page county. In each case the bridges and railway-highway grade separations were completed for four lanes of pavement.

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Following is a list of some of the important railroad grade separation structures and bridges programmed by the states and counties for construction or completion during 1940 in the Chicago suburban area:

Burr Oak avenue viaduct over the Rock Island railway at Blue Island; Kedzie avenue and 79th street under the Wabash railway in Chicago; Stony Island avenue with the South Shore, Michigan Central, and B. & O. C. T. south of Greenwood avenue; Park Road, Archer avenue under B. & O. C. T. at Argo Summit; Central avenue over C. M. St. P. & P. north of North avenue, Chicago; La Grange road over C. M. St. P. & P. near Franklin Park; Touhy and Greenwood avenues, Park Ridge, under C. & N. W.; Willow road over C. M. St. P. & P. and under C. & N. W. west of Northfield; Westleigh road under C. & N. W. and North Shore at Lake Forest; Sheridan road under C. & N. W. at North Chicago, and the Detroit superhighway over the Pennsylvania, Monon, Erie, C. & O. and Nickel Plate railroads between Stony Island avenue, Cook county, and Broadway, Gary.

In Chicago there is a possibility that some work will be started on the city's and county's \$60,000,000 superhighway program.